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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin Department of Justice and Coalition Secure More Than 50 Million Eggs and \$3.3 Million After Uncovering Allegedly Illegal Scheme to Manipulate Egg Prices

Multistate investigation into nation's largest egg producers revealed allegedly illegal scheme that raised costs for consumers and businesses; Wisconsin will receive approximately two million eggs

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Justice and a coalition secured more than 50 million eggs for consumers nationwide and \$3.3 million from some of the nation's largest egg producers for allegedly colluding behind the scenes to raise prices. A multistate investigation with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) revealed that [Cal-Maine Foods \(Cal-Maine\)](#), [Versova/Centrum \(Versova\)](#), and [Hickman's Egg Ranch \(Hickman's\)](#) allegedly illegally coordinated for years to influence a daily price index for eggs, which artificially increased prices for retailers throughout the country. Of the 53 million eggs obtained through the settlement, approximately two million eggs will be delivered directly to food banks and community organizations serving Wisconsin.

“Companies must not make goods less affordable by improperly manipulating prices,” said AG Kaul. “There must be accountability for that kind of conduct.”

The coalition's investigation found that from approximately June 2022 to March 2025, the egg producers allegedly secretly communicated with each other to coordinate their bidding activity and influence the daily egg price quotes published by Urner Barry, a benchmark pricing service widely used in egg supply contracts. For example, in December 2022, Hickman's CEO allegedly emailed Versova and Cal-Maine executives urging them to submit “strong bids, early and often” to push prices

higher. All three companies then allegedly submitted dozens of bids at higher prices, which led to Urner Barry increasing its price quotes. By allegedly manipulating the Urner Barry benchmark, the companies artificially inflated the price of eggs paid by retailers across the nation.

Under the settlement, all three companies must end their allegedly illegal coordination to manipulate prices, adopt compliance measures to prevent future violations, and fully cooperate with oversight by the states. The companies must designate antitrust compliance officers who will monitor for violations of the settlement and report violations to the states and DOJ. The 53 million donated eggs will be provided at the companies' expense to food banks and nonprofit organizations across the participating states and must meet all food safety and regulatory standards. The companies will also pay a combined \$3.3 million to the states.

Joining the Wisconsin Department of Justice and U.S. DOJ in securing this settlement are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, and Vermont.

[A copy of the filed complaint is linked.](#)